

As the dust settles and minds have some time to adequately put their thoughts about the late great William F. Buckley to words...

[National Review](#) - A Symposium:

*Saddened by the news of our beloved William F. Buckley Jr.'s passing Wednesday morning, National Review Online turned to friends, colleagues, students, and admirers of WFB to help capture his impact on America. [Wall Street Journal](#) :*

*Conservatively speaking, the life of William F. Buckley Jr. seems wildly improbable. One man is rarely granted his range of gifts: He was at once an essayist, editor, impresario, controversialist, critic, novelist, sportsman and bon vivant. He was the captain of a publication that, as he once famously put it, stood "athwart History, yelling Stop," yet he personally lived in relentless forward motion. When liberalism was dominant but hidebound in the second half of the last century, he pioneered a new direction that transformed American politics.*

*Buckley himself never lost his faith—in God, his country, the obligation to engage in the controversies of the age, and the wonders of the mind. His half-century at the center of the American scene was a model of thoughtfulness and political creativity that remains as relevant today, perhaps more so. Ave atque vale.*

Also worth reading in the same paper - "[Buckley Athwart History](#) "

[USA Today](#) :

*While Buckley relied on the power of his ideas — often presented in his trademark polysyllabic, Yale-informed, richly Latinate prose — many of today's high-profile commentators rely mostly on the volume button.*

*Buckley's passing reminds of a day when the best known conservative commentators could be civil, well-informed and even happy. To read [his books](#) — which include intellectual tomes, spy novels, autobiographies and sailing narratives — is to see a man with not only strongly held views but also a joy for life. It is truly too bad there aren't more like him.*

[USA Today](#)

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*"Before Bill Buckley, there was nothing there was no conservative movement," said William Kristol, editor of The Weekly Standard, a conservative magazine. "No Bill Buckley, no President Reagan."*

*"You can't overstate his importance," Kristol added.*

*Republican presidential candidates praised Buckley. "When conservatism was a lonely cause, he bravely raised the standard of liberty," said John McCain, the GOP front-runner. Former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee said, "... all conservatives owe Bill Buckley a great debt." [L A Times](#)*

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*By common consent, William F. Buckley Jr., who died Wednesday, was the father of modern conservatism. But he also ended up as one of the Bush administration's most trenchant critics. His death not only represents the loss of one of America's leading intellectual figures but also underscores the extent of the collapse of the conservative movement that has so decisively shaped politics for decades.*

*Like no other personality, Buckley pulled together the disparate strands of the conservative movement to endow it with panache, self-confidence and a sense of being on the cutting edge. An avid sailor, a writer of numerous spy novels and the host of the first of the political talk shows, "Firing Line," Buckley quickly became a celebrity who made conservatism respectable.*

*Sam Tanenhaus, who is writing a Buckley biography, noted in the New Republic that Buckley also had begun to question "the wisdom of having opened the gates quite so wide." Into his movement had stepped neoconservatives and evangelicals who were bent on that most unconservative of propositions -- a war to spread peace in the Middle East. The younger generation now running National Review largely has adopted that neoconservative worldview, much to the older generation's chagrin.*

*The poignancy of Buckley's predicament came home to me that blustery spring day outside the Yacht Club when two young foreign tourists recognized him and took a picture with him. Buckley was elated. The old, familiar grin surfaced for a moment. A troubled expression then returned, we shook hands, and he melted into the crowd. I had the sense that he feared being forgotten. But it is conservatism that is marooned by his death. Perhaps his memory can serve as a beacon for the movement he once guided to return to the solid shores of his -- dare one say it? -- liberal conception of conservatism. [Washington Times](#) :*

*Unquestionably, he was the principal founder of the modern American conservative movement, who had a major influence on the country, the party and the world. He was a wonderfully vivacious, effervescent friend, full of fun, a great sense of humor. He just changed the entire image of American conservatism," said William Rusher, publisher of National Review for 31 years and Mr. Buckley's closest business associate.*

*Mr. Buckley's stature on the national stage was larger than life. He was rigorous but still the model of civility during four decades as host of the public affairs television show "Firing Line" and the author of some 5,600 newspaper and magazine columns. The signature cadence of Mr. Buckley's velvety voice and the precision of his argument had much impact; many luminaries saw him as both the catalyst that gave conservative ideology a brusque entree into history.*

*"National Review was a lonely voice of conservatism in an overwhelmingly liberal establishment. Buckley began what led to Senator Barry Goldwater and his 'Conscience of a Conservative' that led to the seizing of power by conservatives from the moderate establishment within the Republican Party. From that emerged Ronald Reagan," former House Speaker Newt Gingrich said. [Washington Times Editorial](#) :*

*Perhaps Mr. Buckley's most enduring legacy is the work he did in building the modern conservative movement that came to be a powerful force in the Republican Party and in 1980 saw one of its own, Ronald Reagan, elected president. In 1955 Mr. Buckley founded National Review, a magazine he vowed would stand "athwart history yelling Stop!" confident that "a vigorous journal of conservative opinion" could make a critical difference in American culture and politics. On Sept. 11, 1960, a group of young conservative leaders meeting at Mr. Buckley's home in Sharon, Conn., adopted a statement of principles for the modern conservative movement emphasizing: the importance of a free-market economy; the belief that "liberty is indivisible, and that political freedom cannot long exist without economic freedom"; that international Communism is "the greatest single threat to these liberties"; and that "the United States should stress victory over, rather than coexistence with, this menace."*

*In short, Americans who believe in limited government or the concept that liberal elites should not have a cultural monopoly, owes William F. Buckley Jr. debt of gratitude. So, thank you WFB.*